

Puget Sound Partnership Ecosystem Coordination Board

Meeting Summary

July 15, 2010

WSU Research Facility, Mount Vernon, WA

Whidbey Basin	Gary	Rowe
Hood Canal	Teri	King
South Central Puget Sound	Fred	Jarrett
North Central Puget Sound	Steve	Bauer
South Puget Sound	Dan	Wrye
Business Interest	Sam	Anderson
Small Business	Bill	Dewey
Environmental Interest	Kathy	Fletcher
Environmental Interest	Chris	Davis
Cities	Jeanne	Burbidge
Counties	Dave	Somers
Ports	John	Calhoun
Tribal Government	David	Troutt
Legislative Caucus	Shelley	Short
Federal Government - Alternate	Barry	Thom
Federal Government	Tom	McDowell
Federal Government	Tom	Eaton
Washington State Agencies - Designee	Josh	Baldi
Washington State Agencies - Designee	Margen	Carlson
Washington State Agencies - Designee	Naki	Stevens

It is intended that this summary be used along with notebook materials provided for the meeting. A recording of this meeting is also retained by the Partnership as part of the formal record.

Action Items:

- Approval of May 6, 2010, Meeting Summary

Meeting Summary:

- Board Business
 - May 6, 2010, Meeting Summary approval
 - Welcome new member – Chris Davis
 - Recognize outgoing members – Gary Rowe and Dale Brandland
 - Update on ECB terms, appointments, and process
- Stormwater – Needs Assessment update and visioning process
- Legislation
- Puget Sound Science Update – Policy Interface
- Floodplain Management
- Performance Management
 - Dashboard Indicators – ECB input
 - Setting 2020 Targets – ECB input
- State Budget update
- Agency and member updates

CALL TO ORDER

Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) Chair Dave Somers called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m.

Skagit County Councilman Ron Wisen welcomed the group to the Whidbey Action Area.

BOARD BASICS

Approval of May 6, 2010, Meeting Summary

The May 6, 2010, ECB meeting summary was **APPROVED** by the Board as presented.

Welcome new board member Chris Davis

Chair Somers introduced Chris Davis as the new Environmental Caucus representative on the Board. Chris comes to us from The Nature Conservancy.

Recognize outgoing members – Gary Rowe and Dale Brandland

Chair Somers read the service proclamation to Gary Rowe thanking him for his service on the ECB. Dale Brandland was not present but his proclamation will be sent to him.

Update on ECB Terms of service, appointments, and process

Martha Kongsgaard updated everyone on ECB terms and the process for selection of new members.

STORMWATER

Chris Townsend and Joan Lee led this discussion. (See meeting materials for details.)

Chris provided an overview of the work accomplished by Joan and Pam Bissonette. Joan then provided an overview of the report using the same presentation given at the July 14 stormwater workshop. Chris added that there were 60 people at the workshop and in addition to the workshop and ECB presentation the Partnership has had meetings with key stakeholders to preview the report. He said that a more detailed study is needed in the long term but for this report it is limited to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

Although the report appears to be expensive, it is not much when looking at the bigger picture. The question is, if the NPDES were fully implemented, would this take care of the problem? Is this the best way to handle the problem or is there a better way? The simple answer is that NPDES compliance will not get us where we need to be; we need additional programs on Low Impact Development (LID) that are over and above current permits and new chemical-use policies. The questions are as follow:

- What policies are necessary to stop additional impervious surfaces?
- How will the work be funded? Should it be fee based or tax based? What is the appropriate mix of federal, state, and local funds? Also, do we use operational and capital funds?
- What is the best definition of “impervious surface”?

- How clean is clean? What is the magic number?
- Protection or reduction?

Joan and Chris reported that the cost of planning wasn't talked about in detail at the workshop, but the general thinking was that perhaps 1% of the funds should go toward examining ways to do the work better and to include a robust monitoring program.

Next steps: Pam and Joan will incorporate the feedback they have received over the last couple days and will provide the updated report at the next ECB meeting.

SHORELINES WORK GROUP

ECB Shorelines Subcommittee Chair, David Troutt, led this discussion. (See meeting materials for details.)

David Somers commented that there was some confusion about the outcome at the last ECB meeting. The goal of this meeting is to clear up that confusion and move the process forward.

David Troutt reviewed the revised set of recommendations provided by the Shoreline Subcommittee. (See meeting handout for details.) He noted there is terrific urgency in "stopping the bleeding" now.

Next steps to be taken on the shoreline work include:

- Refine work on target set
- Bring Puget Sound Nearshore Estuary Restoration Program (PSNERP) and science into the work
- Deal with freshwater shoreline issues
- Define legislative approach

There was concern voiced about the status of current county plans. For example, are they already using drift cells? What are they currently doing for shoreline protection? It was suggested to gather that information before making suggestions for change.

Margen Carlson reported that Clallam and Jefferson Counties were awarded a grant to implement some of these concepts. PSNERP, WDFW, and Ecology are looking forward to implementation of that grant to see if the use of drift cells is the best level of measurement. She is looking forward to the PSNERP input into the process.

The ECB agreed to move forward because the recommendation seems well thought out and it doesn't set mandates. Instead it suggests measuring at an ecological scale. Additional issues to address include:

- How best to implement and level of pressure
- How to track over time and whether drift cells are the correct level of measure
- How to incorporate drift cells into "no net loss" policy

- Need to better quantify “no net loss”
- How does this fit into the Shoreline Master Program (SMP)? It is fairly clear that changes will be necessary and this is a fairly onerous process. It would be helpful to find ways to make the updates without having to go through the full SMP process.
- How can this body be most useful in providing guidance and technical support
- Need to increase the public awareness of drift cells. There must be support. Where we are looking at the work being done? Are we changing requirements mid-stream? Cities and counties both have limited resources, thus making resources available is key to being successful.

This proposal will move forward to the Leadership Council with the understanding that the ECB will continue to flesh out the recommendations.

LEGISLATION

Dave Somers introduced this agenda item and David Dicks led the discussion. (See meeting materials for details.)

The ECB, as the policy body for the Partnership, discussed its role and its process for passing advisory information to the Leadership Council. The Leadership Council is interested in ECB input on issues, including non-consensus recommendations with an explanation of opinion differences. The value of the ECB to the Leadership Council and Partnership staff is to hear the diverse thoughts then find ways to harmonize the efforts whenever possible.

Dave Somers reported that he usually attends the Leadership Council meetings. There he provides the Council with an overview of the ECB discussions and the general direction the ECB wants to go. He would prefer that the ECB reach consensus if possible, but the Board could call for a vote and, if there are differences, provide a minority report.

David Dicks reminded everyone that because there are fewer funds, this could be a difficult legislative session. He reported that the Governor will announce she is making Puget Sound funding and recovery one of her priorities in the last term of her governorship. The Partnership and Ecology have been asked to develop a funding proposal for Puget Sound. We want to be thankful and commend the Governor for having Puget Sound as a legacy issue. He commended the ECB and the shoreline workgroup for the stormwater work that has been done.

David explained the Partnership is looking at including three issues in its legislative agenda:

- Funding
- Stormwater
- Shorelines

Other issues the Partnership might include are:

- Oil spill prevention – would co-lead legislation with Ecology and others
- Invasive species – others would lead but Partnership would be supportive

- Growth issues
- Boatyard permits, source control strategy, and bottom painting

Staff will be vetting the legislative agenda at the Leadership Council meeting and will use today's discussion to finalize their list.

Federal Funding

David also discussed the reauthorization of the National Estuary Program (NEP) and our move to the Great Waters Program. He reported this would give Puget Sound line-item funding in the program and would be one of our biggest achievements to date. This could provide up to \$90 million in funding. Last year the Puget Sound received \$50 million, which was the same as Chesapeake Bay. (See meeting materials for bill details.)

Puget Sound funding and oil spills

The Gulf coast oil spill creates an opportunity to take an important, known issue and look at ways to address the needs in a worse case scenario in Puget Sound. The Partnership is in the process of hiring an Oil Spill Specialist.

David updated the ECB on the legislative package:

- Plan to build from last year
- The Partnership has been asked by the Speaker to develop a stormwater bill proposal that more legislators can support.
- Staff will continue to work on a request from the Governor to look at a suite of proposals for Puget Sound funding, such as the funding districts
- Think about possibly combining stormwater with the funding request
- Oil spill prevention is the best opportunity to do this

It was the consensus of the ECB to support stormwater funding as a top priority for the 2011 legislative session and it recommends forming a work group to look at the "how."

Kathy Fletcher noted that an overriding issue will be budget cuts and that we need to look at cuts that would do the least amount of damage to the Action Agenda. David agrees and will talk about this at the next meeting. He also thanked the environmental community for making Puget Sound funding a top priority last session.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment requested.

PUGET SOUND SCIENCE UPDATE – POLICY INTERFACE

David St. John and Science Panel Chair, Timothy Quinn, provided an overview of the Puget Sound Science Update and explained how it relates to the ECB. The staff and Science Panel want to make sure the information can be understood by and is useful to the policymakers. (See meeting materials for details.)

Tim and David explained that this would be an iterative process. Policymakers know what the key touch points are and where science can provide answers for their decisions. As we know more about the questions and move the information forward, it will be easier to see what science is needed. Tim explained that you wouldn't find much detail concerning specific issues (such as drift cells) in this version of the Puget Sound Science Update. However, by using a wiki format we will be able to update the information in an on-going process. It will not be fast, but it will be faster than waiting to ask the questions every 2 years.

ECB members appreciate this but don't want to forget the need to educate the public on the problems with Puget Sound. David St. John reported that Mary Ruckelshaus would be creating an executive summary (synthesis document) that will give this information in a clear, concise way for the public to understand.

Tim reported that it is difficult, and inappropriate, for the scientists to develop the questions. This is where policymakers come in. The Science Panel needs the policymakers to develop the questions. For example, you can't address all the stressors in Puget Sound and ask scientists to answer the all the questions at one time. This will take time.

David St. John asked the ECB members to send questions or comments to Tim or himself. There will be another iteration of the questions before the July 29-30 Leadership Council meeting and there will continue to be an on-going dialog. Tim encouraged the members to feel free to ask specific questions. He might not be able to answer all immediately, but he could use them in the future work of the wiki.

Margen Carlson, Josh Baldi, and Tom Eaton will be the ECB contacts for this project.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

David St. John and Millie Judge presented the recently completed floodplain report. At this meeting they are requesting feedback from the ECB. (See meeting materials for details.)

ECB feedback:

- Soundwide approach is appealing
- Concerned with report being heavily focused on levee vegetation
- Need incentives
- Relationship between this approach and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives (RPA) process currently underway – don't want to undermine that (David St. John noted that the policy statement is not meant to undermine the Biological Opinion (BiOp))
- Floodplain is critical to both salmon recovery and floodplain
- Report didn't address community rating system
- There are a lot of options - would like a prioritized list of the options

- May want to do the same as with the stormwater issue and gather information into one place – what is the size of the problem, what are options, etc.

David noted that the report is completed and Millie's project is over. Staff will use the feedback from this discussion as well as comments from the Salmon Recovery Council and Leadership Council.

Josh Baldi will be the ECB point person for this topic and will report back at the next meeting.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Dashboard Indicators

John Becker provided an overview of what indicators are and how they are used. (See meeting materials for details.)

Dashboard comments:

- We all need to see how the dashboard will be vetted with the public – need to understand how this dashboard will compel people to change their behavior and give us a future we want to see
- Some indicators could be in conflict with others and with targets – fishing versus abundance
- Looking forward to explicit process
- Need for social science and market research for social resonance of the dashboard
- Need an attractive dashboard display
- Dashboard needs to be in context with targets – could confuse people with a dashboard if they don't know where you are relative to your targets
- The social science side is really a pioneering effort as no other groups have done this work before
- The Governor said the Sound needs to be “swimmable, diggable, and fishable” we need to work from that and make it clear to anyone and explain how we are making it better
- Did hold an informal focus group and will do more later to see how this resonates with the public
- Would be helpful to see the technical comments separately from the socio-political comments

Phil Levin reported that we have condensed the original 705 suggested indicators to these 20 vital sign indicators. They are vital signs only; they won't tell us exactly what to do or how we will still need to look at other things. The original 705 indicators were organized first by starting with 6 goals, which were divided into domains, focal components, and attributes. Given a different timeline and resources Phil would have suggested a different process to get to the social science indicators. Indicators aren't much use without targets, and there are tradeoffs with targets. Once the indicators are approved, targets will need to be developed.

John provided a wrap up on the action plan going forward:

1. Establish new indicator champions to collaboratively move the dashboard forward
2. Tell the dashboard of ecosystem indicators story – using a communication plan
3. Test ecological importance and social resonance

4. Collect, cleanse, and analyze the associated data
5. Work select families of indicators through the Open Standards process

Setting 2020 Targets

Martha Neuman provided an update on the near term target-setting process. She reported that the Partnership would set 3-5 priority targets by November 2010, and this would include a mix of human and environmental targets. Other targets will be set later.

David Dicks noted that the indicators would ultimately have a full suite of targets. The targets are meant to define success and the full suite will add up to a healthy Puget Sound. We will also have milestones (previously called benchmarks), which determine what is needed for success by 2020. Some of the goals are physically not possible to achieve by 2020. He also reminded the group that there are no magic answers for any of these questions. We will use the open standards process to answer the questions in a rigorous process.

Target options will be presented to the ECB in September.

AGENCY AND MEMBER UPDATES

David Dicks provided an overview of staff work since the last meeting. (See meeting materials for details.)

Josh Baldi provided a one-page handout providing an update on Ecology's oil spill program and Dan Wrye discussed a key acquisition in the South Puget Sound Action Area.

3:30 p.m. ADJOURN

Ecosystem Coordination Board Approval



Dave Somers, Chair

Date

9/10/2010

Next Meeting: September 10, 2010
Pierce County Environmental Services Building